

**Delaware Women's Workforce Council
Public Policy Subcommittee
Office of Women's Advancement and Advocacy
State of Delaware, Department of Human Resources**

Thursday, April 4th, 2019
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Carvel State Office Building,
820 N. French Street, 4th Fl. Conference Room
Wilmington, DE 19801

Members Present:

Linda Barnett, Committee Chair
Louise Cummings
Dr. Marie Laberge

By Phone:

Kimberly Reinagel-Nietubicz -phone,

Staff Present:

Carling Ryan
Stella Harrison

MINUTES

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Linda Barnett at 10:00 am. The chairperson thanked everyone for coming.

Review of proposed policy platform; finalize to present to full council

The Subcommittee reviewed and finalized the draft platform. Ms. Cummings requested that "vigorous" be removed from line 2, and Dr. Laberge asked how the Subcommittee would define a "high standard of benefits." Ms. Barnett explained that having high standard benefits for an employee would include things such as paid parental leave, FMLA, paid vacation and/or sick leave. The committee determined that they would replace "high standard with "fair and equitable." Ms. Barnett stated that she will present the platform to the full Workforce Council at their next meeting.

Review of “Recommendations for the 150th General Assembly” in the OWAA Activities and Recommendations Report

The Subcommittee reviewed the report and determined which recommendations were pertinent to the Women’s Workforce Council. Ms. Ryan confirmed that OWAA would need administrative approval prior to supporting these initiatives with the Council.

The Subcommittee noted that one of the recommendations, passing the second leg of the Equal Rights Amendment, had already been completed.

The Subcommittee then decided to recommend that the full Council supports measures to increase the rates paid to families who receive subsidies for child care (known as “purchase of care”). Rate increases are implemented through the budget process, so the Council’s advocacy would be directed first to the Joint Finance Committee and then to all legislators as they prepare to deliberate on the proposed state budget for FY20. Ms. Barnett indicated that she would discuss outreach options with Melanie Ross Levin.

The Subcommittee then discussed existing measures to establish wellness centers in high needs elementary schools, and remove training and youth wages. Ms. Barnett indicated that this measures would need further review before recommending that the full Council advocate for the bill.

The Subcommittee also discussed ideas for future legislative proposals that they could support, including paid family and medical leave for the public and private sector, and changes to the tipped minimum wage. The Subcommittee would encourage that the Council focus first on state employees, and become informed about how FMLA works for state employees by inviting a subject matter expert from the Department of Human Resources to speak with the Subcommittee. They hoped this person could provide process explanations and suggestions as to what improvements are needed to make this benefit more helpful.

Regarding the tipped minimum wage, Ms. Barnett stated that she would follow up with the Delaware Department of Labor to determine if legislative initiatives would be proposed during this session.

Ms. Barnett noted that Ms. Ross Levin was visiting Washington, D.C. to meet with different organizations to get new policy ideas. Ms. Barnett indicated that she would like Ms. Ross Levin to report back to the Council about the information she gathered on this trip. Ms. Barnett indicated that the next meeting would be after the next Council meeting, and could be influenced by what Ms. Ross Levin reports back to the Council.

Ms. Barnett motioned to adjourned. Ms. Cummings seconded.